



# The Mike

The Newsletter of St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Studio City, CA  
VOLUME 28, ISSUE 7 • November - December 2017

## Being A Blessing

By the Reverend Dan Justin

Does anyone else feel like the holiday season should begin with the crack of a starter's pistol? We're off! It is November and the race has begun. Looking back over past November and December newsletter articles, I noticed a theme. I discovered that I frequently write about finding ways to intentionally slow down during this season of the year.

My articles include prose about watching and waiting for the coming of Jesus. I regularly recommend making space for quiet, solitude, and peace. Who was I kidding with all that? Please allow me to make a confession: I have never been able to follow my own advice. I can't slow down at this time of year. November and December is a CRAZY time at church. We are finishing up the stewardship campaign and getting ready for Advent Lessons and Carols. Holiday Cheer is coming up, an event which is awesome, but also takes a lot of work (mostly done by Meredith and her amazing team of volunteers).

As if things were not busy enough, Diocesan Convention is inconveniently scheduled for early December. The budget must be finalized, preparation for the Annual Meeting begins, and new members of the vestry are being recruited. There is Blue Christmas to plan, regular Christmas to pull off, and two Christmas Eve services to enjoy. There are parties to attend and presents to buy. Then, just about the time I think I have everything under control, I remember that my mother's birthday is on December 20th. How do I forget that almost every year? How can I slow down? And if I can't slow down, why would I think you can slow down?

Perhaps it is time for a new strategy. What if we admit to ourselves that we are not going to be able to slow down at this time of year? What if we let ourselves off the hook and let go of any guilty feelings we have about being so frazzled? Slowing down can become one more thing to do, and we already have too much to do. What if we ask a different question instead?

Some time ago, I was reading an article written by a pastor of a different tradition. While I don't remember where I found the article or even what the article was about, I do recall one thing the author said. He reported beginning each and every day with the same prayer. Each day, as he left his home, he prayed, "Lord, help me



to be a blessing to someone I encounter today." I love that prayer.

What if we adopt this prayer for this busy season? "Lord, help me to be a blessing to someone I encounter today."

This could be the perfect Advent and Christmas plan. We know we are not going to be able to slow down. There is too much to do and too many people to see. Instead of feeling guilty

about it, let's plan for it. Let's approach each and every day seeking opportunities to be a blessing to someone we encounter. Let's ask God to help us see those opportunities when they present themselves.

You could even keep a list or a journal. At the end of the day, before you go to bed, reflect on your day. Write down who you met and what you did to be a blessing to someone. After you have written it down, take time to thank God for the opportunity to be a blessing. And then, ask God to continue to bless that person. Pray for that person, even if they were a total stranger. At the end of this busy season, when you find a free moment to reflect, you may just discover that somewhere along the way, you encountered Jesus. Oh wait, isn't that what this season is all about in the first place?

Blessings,

Dan+



## 2017 Advent and Christmas Schedule

Advent Lessons and Carols	Sunday, December 3 at 8:00am & 10:30am
Holiday Cheer	Saturday, December 9 at 10:00am
Blue Christmas	Wednesday, December 20 at 7:00pm
Children's Pageant	Sunday, December 24 at 5:00pm
The Holy Eucharist	Sunday, December 24 immediately after pageant
Christmas Eve Party	Sunday, December 24 immediately after service
Christmas Music	Sunday, December 24 at 9:30pm
The Holy Eucharist	Sunday, December 24 at 10:00pm
Christmas Morning Breakfast	Monday, December 25 at 9:00am in the Ministry Center
Christmas Day Service	Monday, December 25 at 10:00am

## From the Children's Pastor

By Amber Russo

The air is getting crisp and the leaves are changing colors. Fall is finally here, and we all know what that means...Christmas is just around the corner! After we swallow our last bite of Thanksgiving turkey, most of us will dust off the Christmas decorations, play some holiday music, and prepare for the biggest birthday party of the year. While we anticipate Santa's arrival, it is important to remind our children of the true meaning of Christmas.

At the Faith Factory we will teach our children with the preparation of our annual Christmas Eve Pageant. Children of all ages are welcome to participate. Rehearsals will begin November 26th, the Sunday after Thanksgiving. The pageant will take place at the 5:00pm service on Christmas Eve.



Following the Christmas Eve service is our annual Christmas Eve party. All families are encouraged to join us for a festive celebration including delicious food, dancing, cookie decorating, games, and a photo booth. We will need food donations as well as help with set up and clean up so please contact Amber Russo at [childrenspastor@stmikess.org](mailto:childrenspastor@stmikess.org) if you'd like to help!



## Thoughts from our Seminarian

By Jamie Barrett

Goodness, I can hardly believe that 2017 will be but a memory in just a few weeks! While all of my schoolwork, my work as a hospital chaplaincy intern, and my job have kept me busy indeed this fall, being here at St. Michaels has given me the joy of new relationships and new experiences.

I feel so blessed by this community and the gift of warmth and acceptance I have found here. The very first day I visited St. Michaels this summer I sensed the Holy Spirit was calling me here, and every day since I have had that calling confirmed. Being here with you all, and working and studying with Fr. Dan is enriching my education and path towards ordination, in ways that I could never have imagined. The gifts of St. Michaels and the gaps in my training and preparedness could not have aligned any better if I had formed a search committee to find the perfect match. I have to admit, I am still in awe of the fact that when God calls us to a ministry, whether it's an ordained or a lay ministry, God will provide us with the way and all the tools to help us become whoever God is calling us to be.

I am looking forward to the experience of Advent and Christmas here with all of the possibilities of our worship and devotional life being enriched by the seasons. Father Dan and I have discussed several exciting avenues to explore in the weeks ahead including a Blue Christmas event, a candle-lit evening labyrinth meditation, and the possibility of some new small group formations. Where the latter is concerned, you might get ready to put your thinking cap on as we consider ways we might become better acquainted with each other and God's world around us by examining three things...

- 1) What is it that gives us joy?
- 2) What do we see as the world's great needs?, and
- 3) Where can we see the two above intersect?

In the weeks and months ahead, with God's help and yours, I hope to continue growing in church leadership skills while integrating academic knowledge with the practice of ministry. I look forward to serving at the altar, having an increased pastoral presence, preaching, teaching and getting to know each of you better throughout this winter and spring.

## Suffragan Ball

St. Mikes's Middle School Youth Group attends the 1st annual Suffragan's Ball



## Treasurer's Corner

October 2017—Revenue and Expense Summary

	October Actual	October Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Revenue	\$ 32,190	\$ 33,293	\$341,638	\$332,933
Total Expense	37,254	39,379	392,733	393,786
Net	(\$ 5,064)	(\$ 6,086)	(\$ 51,095)	(\$ 60,853)

## November Birthdays

Day	Name
4	Julian Pimentel
6	Olivia Monge
7	Ana Lefler
8	Charlie Kammer
9	Linnaea Sage
11	Andreas Barberia
12	Sharon Renton
14	Eliza Dilberti
20	Stephen Billington Andrea Fuller
23	Nikolay Best
28	Nancy Woods
29	Pablo Mooradian
30	Jackie Eckberg

## November Anniversaries

Day	Name
8	DJ & Andrea Fuller
12	Susan Guire & Cece Tsou John & Laurie Vincent
13	Brooks & Kathleen Taylor
24	William Hendley & Jon Albert
28	Polly Davis & Peter Epstein

### Should you be listed here?

Or, if you wish to leave your birthday or anniversary unpublished, give the church office a call or e-mail [administrator@stmikessc.org](mailto:administrator@stmikessc.org) to let us know. Birthdays and Anniversaries will be celebrated on the last Sunday of each month.

## December Birthdays

Day	Name
1	Mary Ann Jacobson
1	Hallie Walker
4	Christina Branom
8	Kristen Toedtman
15	Laz Meiman
19	Preston Fray
19	Will Pryor
22	Dawn Bassman
23	Maggie Jackson
23	Emily Roberts
23	Meg Pryor
23	Sophia Rickard
24	Zachary Ramirez
24	Andre Herrman
24	Clara Aweland
26	Samuel Pimentel
28	Avery Wright
28	Grace Daniel
30	Maria Riebs
30	Ryann Hobbs

## December Anniversaries

Day	Name
30	Peer & Roberta Fresh-Ghent

## Vestry Nominating Committee

The Vestry Nominating Committee has begun receiving names of members interested in election to the Vestry. The vestry is the elected, lay leadership of the parish. Each newly elected Vestry member serves for a period of three years. The Vestry meets on the third Tuesday of each month.

The Vestry Nominating Committee reviews potential candidates, selects a slate of nominees, and presents that slate for election by the parish at the annual meeting. Betty Ferrell is the chair of the nominating committee. If you are interested in nominating either yourself or someone else to be considered, please contact Betty Ferrell.

## Diocesan Convention: Bishop Bruno Retires; Bishop Taylor becomes Bishop Diocesan

On Friday, December 1, 2017, at the start of the annual Diocesan Convention, Bishop J. Jon Bruno will officially pass the crozier (the Bishop's staff) to the Rt. Rev. John Taylor. With this symbolic gesture, Bishop Bruno begins his retirement, and Bishop Taylor becomes our new Bishop Diocesan.

John Taylor was elected Bishop Coadjutor at the 2016 Diocesan Convention. He was ordained and consecrated as a bishop in July of 2017. A Bishop Coadjutor is elected to succeed a retiring Diocesan Bishop. The Rt. Rev. John Taylor will be the seventh Bishop of Los Angeles.

Please keep Bishop Taylor and the Diocese of Los Angeles in your prayers during this exciting transition. We look forward to



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## Noisy Church

Have you noticed that church has been getting noisier? It is a wonderful blessing and a joyful sound. St. Michaels has been experiencing growth. We now have approximately seventeen babies in our parish. From newborns to toddlers, there are little ones everywhere.

What are we going to do with so many kids? Some are too young to attend Sunday school. Our current nursery has a maximum capacity of six (we maintain a 3 to 1 ratio of nursery workers to children). Well, the quick answer is that we are not exactly sure yet. We are working on it though. We are exploring options. We may need to set-up a second nursery in one of our other Sunday school rooms. There is the possibility of exploring curriculum for younger children. Any potential plans will require two things: some money, but far more importantly, some volunteers. If you are interested in working with Amber, our Children's Pastor, on some of these or other ideas, please feel free to talk with her. She will be thrilled to explore opportunities for ministry with you.

In the meantime, parents are always welcome to have their children in church with them. We have coloring books, puzzles, and some toys available in the back of the church. Kids are most welcome here! What if they make noise during church? No problem! It's their church too. Sometimes church just needs to be noisy. We can all make a joyful noise to the Lord, together.



# HOLIDAY CHEER 2017 – HOW YOU CAN HELP

By Meredith Reese

Please find Meredith Reese at Coffee Hour, see the sign up lists in the back of the church, or email [stmikesoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:stmikesoutreach@gmail.com).

**Buy a Gift and/or an Outfit for a Child** - We'll give you a wishlist for a child. Monetary donations for others to shop for you is also encouraged. Wish lists will be emailed in the middle of November.

**Cook Food and Bring Treats** - We have an amazing volunteer kitchen staff every year, but extra dishes and treats go a long way! Extra salads, cookies, desserts, and bottled water, are always needed.

**"Wrap" Party Friday Night** - We start decorating and wrapping presents on Friday night, December 8th from 5:00-9:00pm. It's a wonderful way to commune with volunteers if you can't make it to the party on Saturday. All ages welcome.

**Craft Tables, Knitting, Sports, Gingerbread House Decorating, and Activities (Day of Event)** - There are many different tables as well as outdoor activities for the kids. Help out at one or more of the tables on the day. Also I am still looking for team leaders to help organize the volunteers. New ideas are also welcome.

**Entertainment (During the event)** - We are looking for talented individuals to perform musical and upbeat acts during the luncheon.

**Check-In or Clean Up-Crew (Day of Event)** - Keep us running smoothly by joining our check-in or clean-up crews.

We need help gathering all the supplies that makes this event great! Reimbursements are also available thanks to the kind donations of our church community.

## SHOPPING/WISH LIST:

Wrapping Paper  
Ribbons & Bows  
Tape  
Ballpoint Pens  
Sharpie Markers  
Colored Pencils and Markers  
Drawing and Craft Paper  
Candy Canes  
Candy Sprinkles  
Small Candies  
Bottled Water  
Juice Boxes  
Lemonade  
Ornament Hooks

Christmas Decorations  
Plastic Tablecloths  
Wet Wipes  
Hot Dogs and Buns  
BBQ Charcoal  
Children's Books  
Extra Gifts and Toys – New and Unwrapped, please! (DVDs, Stickers, Costume Jewelry, Art Kits, Science Kits, Stuffed animals, Legos, School Supplies, etc.)

This will be an unforgettable event!  
Invite your friends!

Check us out on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/smcopholidaycheer](http://www.facebook.com/smcopholidaycheer)

## HOLIDAY CHEER 12/9/17

- Volunteer
- Donate
- Give a Gift



**Saturday/ Holiday Cheer Party/ 8am-2pm**  
Host the families of MEND and Good Shepherd shelters

**Friday night/ 5pm-9pm**  
Wrap Presents and Decorate Party

St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church  
3646 Coldwater Canyon Ave. Studio City  
(818) 763-9193  
email: [stmikesoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:stmikesoutreach@gmail.com)

# The History of Holiday Cheer

## 20 Years of Bringing Christmas Cheer to those in Need

By Meredith Reese

St. Michaels hosted the Holiday Cheer party for the first time in 2004, but the party to bring cheer to needy families and deliver Santa gifts to children started back in 1997. That means this year we are celebrating Holiday Cheer's 20th Birthday.

In the Spring of 1997, Jane Wilson and a group of friends volunteered at a makeover day at Good Shepherd, a shelter for homeless women and children. They had learned about the party through Big Sunday, an organization dedicated to connecting charity causes in LA. Good Shepherd twice a year hosted makeover parties for their clients at the shelter. About a dozen hairdressers and stylists would donate their services. Jane thought she could add to the event by inviting comedians to volunteer and entertain the children while their moms had their makeovers. When she learned Good Shepherd needed extra help with providing Christmas gifts for the children, Holiday Cheer was born. Here was a day to celebrate families, honor hard-working mothers, and provide

gifts for children, who may not otherwise have a Merry Christmas. Volunteers would be able to give back and interact with the families who needed good cheer the most. The next year Good Shepherd accepted Santa gifts and new outfits. Jane and a bunch of friends from the LA community gave a Holiday party through 2003.

Jane Wilson and her family started attending St. Michaels in 2004. She pitched the Holiday Cheer party to the parish who signed up and wanted to include MEND, a center to help poverty-level families of the San Fernando Valley. St. Michaels had learned in October that the MEND facility had been damaged in a fire. The room that housed the clothing donations, as well as toys for Christmas that year was destroyed. Jane and the church leadership took it upon themselves to pay back at the Holiday Cheer party and make it the biggest Outreach event of year. St. Michaels opened its doors to the women and children of Good Shepherd, and clients from MEND. A contact at My Friend's Place also heard about the good work of St. Michaels and invited a group of teenagers and new parents to attend the party. A Downtown LA drop-in shelter also invited their clients. The first Holiday Cheer party at St. Michaels quickly grew to full capacity and 70 extra children arrived. Every volunteer that day worked to ensure that every person had a lunch to eat and every child received a toy and a new outfit. It was chaotic to be sure,

but indeed the promise was kept, as Jane organized volunteers to deliver gifts into the following weeks.

In 2005, an extra Christmas Party was hosted at My Friend's Place. In 2006 the St. Michaels Holiday Cheer tradition was set to host shelters at the church, provide a hot lunch, and toys and outfits from Santa – All thanks to the donations of St. Michael's parishioners. We have fulfilled our promise since those early, hectic days, to now run a successful partnership with the shelters of MEND and Good Shepherd. Many St. Michaels families share the Holiday Cheer tradition, be that sponsoring a family, stuffing gift bags, handing out flowers, baking and decorating gingerbread houses, cooking in the kitchen, playing music, singing carols, and delivering presents with Santa's elves.

It's a big job each year, and it highlights the talents in our fellowship. This year, our guests are especially looking forward to a family portrait studio hosted by Melissa and Dave Basta, and an improv class led by Suzanne Rosenberg.

There are still many volunteer spots to fill. And don't forget to sign up to shop for a child!

Contact Meredith Reese or [stmikesoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:stmikesoutreach@gmail.com)

## Advent Lessons and Carols: An Old Tradition in a New Form

Advent Lessons and Carols is one of my favorite services of the year. Traditionally, the service is held at 5:00pm on either the first or second Sunday of Advent. Lessons from the scriptures are read and the choir sings anthems or leads hymns in response to the lessons. It is a beautiful way to enter into this season of watching and waiting.

Unfortunately, this amazing service is not always well attended, most likely because it is on a Sunday evening. The choir puts a tremendous amount of work into the service. While they are not performing for the benefit of the congregation, it can still be discouraging to have only thirty or forty people present, especially when twelve of them are in the choir. How do you offer the Advent Lessons and Carols service in a way more people can participate? You move it to Sunday morning!

This year St. Michael and All Angels will once again enter the Advent season with Lessons and Carols. However, instead of 5:00pm, the service will take place during our normal Sunday morning worship times. Both our 8:00am and 10:30am services will feature an abbreviated Lessons and Carols service (abbreviated in that it will have six lessons rather than the traditional nine and there will be no sermon that morning). The Holy Eucharist will still be celebrated at both services.

We hope many more people will be able to participate in our annual Advent Lessons and Carols service this year. It will be on Sunday, December 3rd at 8:00am and 10:30am (please note, the 8:00am service will not be led by the choir).

## Blue Christmas

Blue Christmas is a service which recognizes that the holidays are not a source of joy for many people. They can be a time of pain, depression, loneliness, and grief for any number of reasons.

Blue Christmas is, at its core, a healing service. It will not look like any other service offered here at St. Michaels. The sanctuary will be lit primarily by candle light. The music will be different. It will be a quiet, contemplative service with healing prayer and the anointing with oil made available. The service will also include the Holy Eucharist.

We gather as a community to honor, pray for, and bless those members or friends for whom this holiday is difficult. And of course, all are welcome to attend – even if you are not blue this Christmas. Join us as we pray for others.

The Blue Christmas service will take place on Wednesday, December 20, 2017 at 7:00pm in the church.





# The Calendar

November 2017

**Sunday Schedule** - Sunday Services are 8:00 am (no choir) and 10:30 am (with choir) in the Sanctuary.  
 - Rector's Bible Study begins at 9:15 in the Ministry Center  
 - Sunday School begins at 10:30 am.  
 - Coffee Hour immediately follows the 10:30 am service.

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

*Locations:*

- CO Church Office
- MR Music Room
- FR Fireside Room
- MC Ministry Center
- L The Loft (formerly the stage)
- S Sanctuary

1 All Saints Day

2

3

4

5 Pentecost 22  
(Proper 26 A)

- 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S)
- 9:15 am Rector's Bible Study (MC)
- 10:30 am Holy Eucharist & Baptism
- 10:30 am Sunday School
- 11:30 am Coffee Hour (MC)
- 11:30 am Sunday Sack Lunches (MC)
- 1:30 Crop Walk Northridge UMC

6

7

8

6:30 pm Mid-Week (MC)

9

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)

10

11 Veterans' Day

1:00 pm Concerned United Birthparents (FR)

12 Pentecost 23  
(Proper 27 A)

- 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S)
- 9:15 am Rector's Bible Study (MC)
- 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S)
- 10:30 am Sunday School
- 11:30 am Coffee Hour (MC)

13

6:30 pm Book Discussion Group

14

7:00 pm Finance Committee Meeting (CO)

15

16

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)

17

18

19 Pentecost 24  
(Proper 28 A)

- 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S)
- 9:15 am Rector's Bible Study (MC)
- 10:30 am Holy Eucharist
- 10:30 am Sunday School
- 11:30 am Coffee Hour (MC)

20

21

7:00 pm Vestry (L)

22

23 Thanksgiving Day

24

25

26 Pentecost Last  
(Proper 29)

- 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S)
- 9:15 am Adult Education (MC)
- 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S)
- 10:30 am Sunday School
- 11:30 am Coffee Hour (MC)
- 11:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry (MC)

27

28

29

30 St. Andrew

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)



# The Calendar

December 2017

**Sunday Schedule** • *Sunday Services are 8:00 am (no choir) and 10:30 am (with choir) in the Sanctuary.*  
 • *Rector's Bible Study begins at 9:15 in the Ministry Center*  
 • *Sunday School begins at 10:30 am.*  
 • *Coffee Hour immediately follows the 10:30 am service.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
<b>3</b> Advent 1 8:00 am Lessons & Carols w/HE (S) 9:15 am Rector's Bible Study (MC) 10:30 am Lessons & Carols w/HE (S) 10:30 am Sunday School 11:30 am Coffee Hour (MC) 11:30 am Sunday Sack Lunches )	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> St. Nicholas	<b>7</b> 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	<b>8</b> 5:00 pm Holiday Cheer Preparation (MC)	<b>9</b> 8:00 am Holiday Cheer (MC)
<b>10</b> Advent 2 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S) 9:15 am Rector's Bible Study(MC) 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S) 10:30 am Sunday School 11:30 am Coffee Hour (MC)	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 6:30 pm Finance Committee (CO)	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> Advent 3 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S) 9:15 am Rector's Bible Study (MC) 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S) 10:30 am Sunday School 11:30 am Coffee Hour (MC)	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 7:00 pm Vestry (L)	<b>20</b> 7:00 pm Blue Christmas (S)	<b>21</b> St. Thomas 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> Advent 4 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S) 9:15 am Rector's Bible Study (MC) 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S) 10:30 am Sunday School 11:30 am Coffee Hour (MC) <b>Christmas Eve</b> 5:00 pm Christmas Pageant & Holy Eucharist (S) 9:30 pm Christmas Music (S) 10:00 pm Holy Eucharist (S)	<b>25</b> Christmas Day 9:00 am Christmas Breakfast (MC) 10:00 am Holy Eucharist (S)	<b>26</b> St. Stephen	<b>27</b> St. John	<b>28</b> Holy Innocents	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> Christmas 1 8:00 am Holy Eucharist (S) 9:15 am Rector's Bible Study(MC) 10:30 am Holy Eucharist (S) 10:30 am Sunday School 11:30 am Coffee Hour (MC) 11:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry						

*Locations:*  
 CO Church Office  
 MR Music Room  
 FR Fireside Room  
 MC Ministry Center  
 L The Loft (formerly the stage)  
 S Sanctuary

# St. Michael and All Angels Church

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Alex Morales, *Junior Warden*  
Alan Fields, *Treasurer*  
Diane Ballowe, *Clerk*  
Elizabeth Bartolomea  
Karen Holleman  
Meredith Reese  
Amber Russo  
Petra Sutter  
Brooks Taylor  
Steven Wright

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## Vision Statement

*To be a welcoming, inclusive Christian community growing in faith through worship, prayer, study, and social action.*

## Our Mission Priority

*Our mission priority is to focus on the United Nations' First Millennium Goal: To eradicate extreme hunger and poverty.*